



Philosophical Ponderings of a Farmer

Agriculture and Human Society **(c) 2018**

This is a topic I actually spend a lot of time thinking about. Especially considering my chosen profession. A bit ironic, I know, but I believe that the development of agriculture, around 10,000 to 12,000 years ago, was the beginning of the end for human society and culture.

With agriculture (as opposed to hunting/gathering), a more reliable food supply was established, a supply that could be increased to meet demand. And as demand grew, slowly at first, humans began developing technologies to make farming more efficient. It started innocently enough, with things like diverting streams for irrigation or clearing a small plot of land for pasture. 10,000 years ago, with human population at approximately 5 million, this had a relatively minor impact on the planet.

But these advances are what allowed population to increase in a way that was previously limited by natural resources, and complex societies with specialized agricultural workers began to develop. The more humans began controlling their environment, bending the laws of nature that serve to limit excess and keep things in balance, the larger the cities were able to grow, and more and more new technologies were required to keep up with this growth.

Fast forward several thousand years, and I'd say we've gotten pretty good at ignoring these laws of nature in favor of further technological innovations. But at some point (soon), we will run out of resources and nature will put things back in balance. It's happened before (think of the collapse of Mesopotamia or the Mayan empire), but I think this time it will occur on a much larger scale, considering the global interconnectedness of today's society.

In the meantime, I'm going to continue hanging out with my tomatoes in the garden.